

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 WELLIN 04081 01 OF 02 090655Z
ACTION MMO-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 PER-01 ABF-01
NSC-05 OMB-01 AID-05 USIA-06 PC-01 SY-05 /055 W
-----025160 090711Z/13

R 090444Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3990
INFO AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMCONSUL AUCKLAND POUCH

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 2 WELLINGTON 04081

FROM CHIEF OF MISSION

EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: AODE
SUBJECT: EVALUATION BY CHIEF OF MISSION OF PERSONNEL
LEVELS

43*: STATE 201122

1. THE REFERENCED CABLE ASKS FOR MY EVALUATION OF USG ACTIVITIES AT THE POSTS FOR WHICH I AM RESPONSIBLE. MOST OF THE INFORMATION YOU WILL NEED HAS ALREADY BEEN SUPPLIED IN WELLINGTON'S 2615 OF JULY 7TH. THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ARE SUPPLEMENTARY TO THAT INFORMATION.

2. AS THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR TO NEW ZEALAND, I AM ALSO ACCREDITED TO FIJI, WESTERN SAMOA, AND TONGA. OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS, WE HAVE FACED NEW CHALLENGES AND TAKEN NEW INITIATIVES IN OUR RAPIDLY DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS WITH ALL FOUR OF THESE COUNTRIES. MANAGING THESE INITIATIVES TO CONTROL GROWTH OF THE UNITED STATES PRESENCE IN THIS AREA HAS BEEN A CONTINUING CONCERN OF MINE AND, AT MY DIRECTION, FRESH APPROACHES FOR THE EFFECTIVE COORDINA-

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 WELLIN 04081 01 OF 02 090655Z

TION OF ALL UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AGENCIES OPERATING IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC REGION HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED.

WELLINGTON HAS DEVELOPED INTO A REGIONAL SUPPORT CENTER WITH COMMUNICATIONS, PERSONNEL, DISBURSING AND BUDGET AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITIES. WE HAVE PUT TOGETHER THE STAFF AND DEVELOPED THE FACILITIES NECESSARY TO HANDLE

THIS PROPERLY, WORKING CONSISTENTLY TO MAINTAIN A LEAN, EFFECTIVE USG PRESENCE IN THE AREA.

3. I BELIEVE THAT ALL USG OPERATIONS AT MY POSTS ARE ESSENTIAL AND MINIMALLY STAFFED. UNDER MY PERSONAL SUPERVISION, I HAVE SEEN TO IT THAT AN INCREASE IN THE SUBSTANTIVE WORKLOAD AND IN A WIDE RANGE OF ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FUNCTIONS HAS RESULTED IN ALMOST NO INCREASE IN PERMANENT STAFFING LEVELS. HERE IN WELLINGTON WE HAVE CONSTRUCTED AND MOVED INTO A NEW CHANCERY BUILDING WITH LITTLE INCREASE IN PERMANENT STAFFING LEVELS. IN FACT, WELLINGTON IS FACED WITH THE FORTHCOMING LOSS OVER THE NEXT MONTHS OF ONE AMERICAN, TWO LOCAL EMPLOYEES AND THREE MARINE SECURITY GUARDS WHOSE PRESENCE WAS REQUIRED DURING THE VARIOUS STAGES OF CHANCERY CONSTRUCTION. WE HAVE ALSO RECENTLY LOST TWO SY POSITIONS, WHICH HAD BEEN NEEDED TO HANDLE THE SECURITY REQUIREMENTS OF THE NEW BUILDING. AS YOU CAN WELL IMAGINE THE MERE FACT THAT WE HAVE COMPLETED THE MOVE FROM THE FORMER PREMISES TO THE CHANCERY DOES NOT MEAN THAT ALL WORK HAS BEEN COMPLETED. FOR EXAMPLE, CONSTRUCTION WORK ON THE SECURE CONFERENCE ROOM AND ON THE PERMANENT RECEPTION AREA IN THE LOBBY HAS NOT YET BEGUN. THE PRESSURES PLACED ON THE ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION, NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF THE NEW CHANCERY, BUT BECAUSE EVERY AMERICAN EMPLOYEE IS HOUSED IN GOVERNMENT-OWNED OR GOVERNMENT-LEASED AND FURNISHED QUARTERS ARE SUCH THAT THE

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 WELLIN 04081 01 OF 02 090655Z

DEPARTMENT HAS RECENTLY AUTHORIZED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TWO NEW LOCAL POSITIONS. EVEN WITH THIS SLIGHT ENLARGEMENT THE SECTION WILL BE STRETCHED TO THE UTMOST OVER THE NEXT YEAR IN COPING WITH ITS USUAL WORKLOAD PLUS THE REMAINING CONSTRUCTION WORK.

4. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO POINT OUT THAT THE DISBURSING OFFICER POSITION IS BEING TRANSFERRED SHORTLY FROM WELLINGTON TO SUVA. I RECOGNIZE THAT 90 PERCENT OF THE WORK THAT THE DISBURSING OFFICER WAS DOING HERE WILL NOW BE DONE OUT OF SUVA. NEVERTHELESS, THE LOSS OF THIS POSITION WILL ALSO THROW AN ADDED BURDEN ON MY ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION.

5. AS OUR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO THE PACIFIC HAS GOTTEN UNDER WAY, THE EMBASSY WORKLOAD HAS INCREASED APPRECIABLY. WHATEVER THE OUTCOME OF FUTURE CHANGES IN AMBASSADORIAL JURISDICTIONS IN THE PACIFIC, CLOSE COORDINATION WITH THE NEW ZEALANDERS, THE LARGEST, MOST ACTIVE AND MOST EXPERIENCED AID DONOR IN THE REGION, WILL BE ESSENTIAL. ESTABLISHMENT OF A PEACE CORPS PROGRAM IN THE COOK ISLANDS WILL ALSO BRING WITH IT INCREASED

RESPONSIBILITIES. THE SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY HAS ALSO HAD ITS EFFECT HERE. NEW ZEALAND IS A MEMBER OF A WIDE RANGE OF THESE INSTITUTIONS AND CLOSE COOPERATION WITH WELLINGTON IN THESE AREAS IS A KEY ELEMENT OF THE PARM.

6. THE CURRENT STAFFING LEVEL AT SUVA IS A BARE BONES OPERATION, WITH ALL STAFF WEARING SEVERAL HATS. SHOULD ONE USG ACTIVITY BE GIVEN A LOW PRIORITY AND DROPPED, IT WOULD RELIEVE ONE EMPLOYEE OF ONLY ONE PART OF HIS WORK.

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PAGE 01 WELLIN 04081 02 OF 02 090611Z

ACTION MMO-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 PER-01 ABF-01
NSC-05 OMB-01 AID-05 USIA-06 PC-01 SY-05 /055 W
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R 090444Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3991
INFO AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMCONSUL AUCKLAND POUCH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 02 WELLINGTON 04081

LOAD; IT WOULD NOT MEAN THAT AN ENTIRE POSITION COULD BE ABOLISHED. IN FACT, WITH THE INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF INSTITUTIONS LIKE THE SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM AND UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC (BOTH HEADQUARTERED IN SUVA) IN THE REGION, DEMANDS CAN BE EXPECTED TO GROW SUBSTANTIALLY. WITH THE PROSPECT THAT AN AMBASSADOR WILL BE NAMED TO BE RESIDENT IN SUVA DURING FY '78, THE DEPARTMENT IS, IN FACT, IN THE PROCESS OF AUTHORIZING NEW POSITIONS FOR THAT POST.

7. I WOULD LIKE TO EMPHASIZE THAT I HAVE GIVEN CONSIDERABLE THOUGHT TO THE DEPARTMENT'S REQUEST IN THE REFERENCED CABLE. I AM CONVINCED THAT NONE OF THE USG OPERATIONS AT THE POSTS FOR WHICH I AM RESPONSIBLE CAN BE CHARACTERIZED AS LOW PRIORITY. ANY ACTION ON MY PART TO IDENTIFY LOW PRIORITY ACTIVITIES OR TO DESIGNATE SPECIFIC POSITIONS FOR POSSIBLE REDUCTION (OTHER THAN THOSE IN THE PROCESS OF BEING REMOVED AT THE PRESENT TIME) WHEN I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT I CAN DO SO IN GOOD

CONSCIENCE, WOULD REPRESENT AN ENORMOUS DISSERVICE TO USG
OPERATIONS. SELDEN

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Decapton Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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